

UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2001

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08-01-01	Unliquidated Balances on Type 60 Purchase Orders	S/D
08-03-01	Energy Conservation at Federal Facilities	S/D
08-15-01	Class Action Complaint	N.O.Officials
08-16-01	Deputy Chief Information Officer	RD Employees
08-17-01	Electronic Earnings and Leave Statements	S/D
08-22-01	Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D, D/D, C/S
	Results of Fiscal Year 2001 Fair Housing Occupancy Survey	S/D
08-30-01	Move – Information Resources Management and Procurement Management Division	N.O. Officials

August 30, 2001

SUBJECT: Move – Information Resources Management and
Procurement Management Division

TO: National Office Officials
National Office Employees

The Rural Development Information Resources Management staff and Procurement Management Division will be moving from the NASA Building to the Reporters Building. We are looking forward to this move which is scheduled for August 31 and September 1. However, we do anticipate some disruption during this time.

We do want to insure your year-end requests are not “lost in the shuffle”. Therefore, we are asking for your cooperation and patience as we prepare for the move. Please do not submit any requests (via fax, regular mail, etc.) on Friday, August 31 and Tuesday, September 4.

The Information Resources Management staff and Procurement Management Division will be located on the eighth floor of the Reporters Building, and their telephone numbers will remain unchanged.

/signed/ SHERIE HINTON HENRY

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Acting Deputy Administrator
Operations and Management

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2001

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

August 22, 2001

SUBJECT: Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs
and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)

TO: Rural Development State Directors
Rural Development Managers
and Community Development Managers

ATTN: Rural Housing, Program Director

The following interest rate, effective August 1, 2001, is changed as follows:

<u>Loan Type</u>	<u>Existing Rate</u>	<u>New Rate</u>
ALL LOAN TYPES		
Treasury Judgement Rate	3.460%	3.590%

The Department of Treasury, working with Congress has eliminated the auction of the 52-week bill. The Treasury Judgement rate therefore is no longer based on this auction. The Treasury Judgement rate is now based on the weekly average 1-year Constant Maturity Treasury (CMT) yield. The rate is published by the Federal Reserve System, Board of Governors. The current rate shown above is as of the week ending 7/27/01. The actual judgement rate that will be used will be the rate for the calendar week preceding the date the defendant becomes liable for interest.

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Sent by Electronic Mail on 08-24-01 at 4:30 p.m. by PAD.

This rate may be found by going to the Federal Reserve web site for the weekly average 1-year CMT yield (www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data/wf/tcmly.txt).

Please notify appropriate personnel of this interest rate information.

(Signed by James C. Alsop)

JAMES C. ALSOP
Acting Administrator
Rural Housing Service

August 22, 2001

TO: State Directors
Rural Development

ATTN: Multi-Family Housing Chiefs and Coordinators

FROM: James C. Alsop *(Signed by James C. Alsop)*
Acting Administrator
Rural Housing Service

SUBJECT: Results of Fiscal Year 2001 Fair Housing Occupancy Survey

Following are the results of some of the first reports on Multi-Family Housing (MFH) including both Rural Rental Housing (RRH) and Farm Labor Housing (FLH) tenant demographics. These results are based on January 2001 data from the consolidated Multi-Family Housing Tenant File System (MTFS).

You will notice that most of the information has changed moderately since the last survey, conducted in 1999, the highlights of this year's data include:

- ◆ The number of rental units in the MFH portfolio has increased by 15,000 units, going from 453,275 units in 1999, to 468,379 units by 2001. The increase is primarily due to more complete and accurate data being available to report.
 - ◆ The percentage of disabled and handicapped total tenant population has increased by 2.5 percent.
 - ◆ The total number of Hispanic/Latino tenants has dramatically increased by 8,007 going from 27,466 in 1999 to 35,473 by 2001, resulting in a 1.8 percentage increase.
 - ◆ The percentage of tenants with very low incomes increased from 88.5 percent in 1999, to 90.1 percent by 2001. In 1999, we lacked income-level data for 0.74 percent of the tenants as compared to only 0.03 percent in 2001.
 - ◆ Female head of household constitutes 73.1 percent of tenant heads of household.

The proportion of elderly, disabled, or handicapped tenants, who by definition are considered eligible to occupy elderly housing increased to 56.7 percent. The proportion of non-elderly tenants has declined slightly, moving down from 43.9 percent in 1999 to 43.3 percent in 2001. The proportion of age determined elderly tenants decreased from 75.1 percent of elderly by definition in 1999 to 72.4 percent in 2001. The proportion of tenants with disabilities increased, going from 20.8 percent of elderly by definition in 1999 to 23.0 percent by 2001. The proportion of handicapped tenants stayed more constant, with 4.2 percent in 1999 and 4.5 percent in 2001.

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Housing Programs

Finally, by 2001 minority tenants increased to 26.4 percent compared to 24.8 percent in 1999 and white, non-Hispanic tenants decreased from 74.9 in 1999 to 73.2 percent by 2001.

Also, on a separate attachment for your review are two new categories of occupancy statistics available for the first time this year. The first report documents the type of tenant subsidy received by each tenant household. The second report documents the extent that tenants household experience rent overburden. Rent overburden occurs when a tenant household contributes more than 30 percent of their adjusted income for shelter costs. We will continue to work on additional reports from the MTFS system to make this type of data more available.

Thank you and your staff for helping to make this new data project a success.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Ancil Green of our staff on (202) 690-0760.

[Attachments \(click here to see attachments\)](#)

August 17, 2001

SUBJECT: Electronic Earnings and Leave Statements

TO: Rural Development State Directors
National Office Officials

ATTN: Directors, Administrative programs
Human Resources Managers

We have been informed that effective Pay Period 16, which began August 12, 2001, all USDA employees can elect to discontinue having paper Earnings and Leave Statements (ELS) mailed to their residence. Instead, they can access an electronic version via the USDA National Finance Center web site and their Employee Personal Page. See the attached letter from the Department for more details.

Please inform your employees about this option, which has several benefits but is voluntary. States with unions will need to meet their notification and bargaining obligations before informing bargaining unit employees.

If you or your employees have any questions about the electronic ELS, please contact your servicing personnel specialist. If you have questions about your bargaining responsibilities. Contact Sarah Smalls (202) 692-0306, or Chris Kunz at (314) 539-2329.

(Signed by Diana Shermeyer)

TIMOTHY J. RYAN
Assistant Administrator
for Human Resources

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE:
July 31, 2002

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

ATTACHMENT

July 30, 2001

TO: Deputy Administrators for Management

FROM: Patricia E. Healy / S /
Acting Chief Financial Officer

SUBJECT: Electronic Earning and Leave Statements

I am pleased to announce a milestone in the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) commitment to the goals of the Government Paperwork Elimination Act. Effective Pay Period 16, August 12, 2001, all USDA employees will be able to elect to discontinue receiving paper Earnings and Leave Statements (ELS) mailed to their residence. Instead, they can access an electronic version of ELS, via the NFC web site (www.nfc.usda.gov) and their Employee Personnel Page (EPP). More than 31,000 USDA employees have already established their personnel page. For employees who have not yet requested the establishment of their personal page, full instructions are given on NFC's Home Page by clicking on "Using the Employee Personal Page."

Listed below are some of the benefits to employees who chose this option.

- Save Time – EPP eliminates the need to request information from agency personnel.
- Convenient – Employees can access the system 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from anywhere in the world.
- Voluntary – Employees can choose whether they want to receive the electronic ELS, but if they do not choose this option they will still receive the ELS in paper statement form through the mail.
- More Timely – Earnings and leave information is available right after the payroll process completes – no more waiting for the paper statement to show up in the employee's mailbox days later.
- Electronic Filing – No more paper ELS to file or lose. At least a year's worth of statements will be available with a click of a button. Employees print an ELS when they might need a copy. The electronic copies will be retained on line for 3 years once the electronic ELS is elected.

- Secure – Employee data is protected with 128-bit Secure Socket layer encryption when it travels over the Internet. It can be accessed only with the employee's valid Social Security Number and Personal Identification Number known only by the employee.

Although the ELS option received a favorable reaction from several Unions representing USDA employees when it was discussed in November 2000 in the Partnership Council, please note that this discussion does not relieve agencies from notifying their unions and negotiating as appropriate at the local level. Please make sure that your mission area personnel officers are notified in order that they may carry out any labor relations obligations.

The electronic ELS is one facet of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's plan to reduce reliance on paper processes, thus addressing the requirements under the government Paperwork Elimination Act, and provides employees with the flexibility to choose how their ELS is delivered to them. I know I can count on your support.

August 16, 2001

SUBJECT: Deputy Chief Information Officer

TO: All Rural Development Employees

Effective August 13, 2001, John Distler has been appointed as the Deputy Chief Information Officer. Mr. Distler's official duty station will be St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. Distler will be responsible for managing the activities of the Information Resources Management staff in St. Louis (Systems Services Division, Information Technology Division, and the Centralized Help Desk). He can be reached at 314-539-2425 and his email address remains john.distler@stl.rural.usda.gov.

(Signed by Sherie Hinton Henry)

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Acting Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 13, 2002

FILING INSTRUCTION:
Administrative/Other Programs

August 15, 2001

SUBJECT: Class Action Complaint

TO: Directors, Administrative Programs
Human Resources Managers
Chief, Field Services Branch
Chief, National Office Operations Branch

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has conditionally certified a class action complaint against the U.S. Department of Agriculture. According to the Department's Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), "This class action involves all Asian employees who were in the grades of GS-13, GS-14, and GS-15 between February 1994 to present."

The Department's Office of the General Counsel has informed OHRM that all information related to this class action must be retained. In response, OHRM has issued the following guidance:

As a result of this class action, all agency heads, staff offices directors, personnel officers, supervisors, and other USDA employees with access to these records are instructed not to destroy any personnel files or information that may be related to employees that could fit into the definition of the Asian employees in the GS-13, GS-14, and GS-15 grade levels between February 1994 to present.

Please ensure you comply with these instructions if you have information relevant to this class of employees. If you have any questions, contact Diana Shermeyer, Director, Mission Area Personnel Services Division, at (202) 692-0219.

(Signed by Timothy J. Ryan)

TIMOTHY J. RYAN
Assistant Administrator
for Human Resources

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 31, 2002

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

August 3, 2001

SUBJECT: Energy Conservation at Federal Facilities

TO: Rural Development State Directors
National Office Officials

Due to President Bush's memorandum dated May 3, 2001, directing Federal Agencies to conserve energy at Federal facilities, the following information is being furnished in order to reduce energy consumption:

- . Turn off display, decorative, and non-mission essential lighting
- . Turn off lights when leaving a room
- . Turn off personal desk lamps and task lights if not needed
- . Activate the Energy Star "power saver" and "sleep" features on computers
- . Turn off monitors and printers when idle
- . Reduce the use of personal appliances, such as space heaters, fans, and radios
- . Use thermal carafes instead of leaving coffeepots turned on
- . Ensure that personal appliances, such as coffee pots and radios, are turned off when not in use
- . Make certain vent grills are not blocked by plants, books, or furnishings
- . Turn off all energy consuming devices when leaving for the day (lights, window air conditioners, space heaters, and other appliances)
- . Avoid after-hours programs.

If you should have any questions, please contact Denice Kun of the Space Management Branch (SMB) in St. Louis, Missouri at (314) 539-2413.

(Signed by Sharon Randolph) for

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Acting Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 31, 2002

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

August 1, 2001

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: FC-360

SUBJECT: Unliquidated Balances
on Type 60 Purchase Orders

TO: Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Rural Development Program Chiefs
Rural Development Contract Program Managers

The attached reports identify unliquidated obligations for Type 60 purchase orders. Please review the reports and verify that the unliquidated balances are correct and still valid. To assist in your review, attached are copies of the reports, the Annual Certification of Unliquidated Obligations for Contractual Type 60 Purchase Orders, and Annual Certification of Unliquidated Obligations for Noncontractual Type 60 Purchase Orders (Attachment 1).

After reviewing and verifying the unliquidated balances, please process an amendment for each purchase order that does not contain a valid unliquidated obligation. Full cancellation of the purchase orders should be processed with a "ZB" SUB code on the amendment. This action will reduce the obligation amount to the amount paid.

Once you have reviewed and verified these reports, indicate the date the final amendment was submitted to NFC and verified on the Purchase Order Inquiry System (PRCHINQ). Return the form provided (Attachment 2) and a copy of the reports marked for cancellation to the address indicated, no later than September 4, 2001.

Funding for all Fiscal Year (FY) 1996 purchase orders will expire on September 30, 2001. At that time, the FY 1996 purchase orders will be moved to history. Your State Office will have to reestablish, in PRCHINQ, any FY 1996 purchase orders that are still pending action as FY 2001 purchase orders. Also, NFC will automatically deobligate all FY 1996 purchase orders that are remaining.

Your timely and accurate response is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Haas at 314-539-3525 or Letitia Mims at 314-539-2430.

(Signed by Christine C. Burgess)

CHRISTINE C. BURGESS
Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Rural Development

2 Attachments

(Attachment 1 will be broken down by State and sent out individually. It is not available on the Internet)

EXPIRATION DATE::
July 31, 2002

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: FC-360

SUBJECT: Unliquidated Balances on
Type 60 Purchase Orders

TO: Rural Development
FC-360
Attention - Cindy Haas
P.O. Box 200011
St. Louis, Missouri 63120-0011

We have reviewed the attached reports and the following action should be taken:

- _____ We have reviewed the report and no purchase orders are to be cancelled.
- _____ We have processed our amendments through our office. The unliquidated obligations that remain are valid.

State Director

Attachment(s)